

March 23, 2021 Council Meeting

The regular meeting of the Council of the City of Martinsville, Virginia was held on March 23, 2021 in Council Chambers, Municipal Building, at 7:00 PM with Mayor Kathy Lawson presiding. Other Council Members present included Danny Turner, Jennifer Bowles, Tammy Pearson and Chad Martin. Staff present included City Manager Leon Towarnicki, Assistant City Manager/City Attorney Eric Monday, Clerk of Council Karen Roberts, Community Development Director Mark McCaskill, Finance Director Mandy McGhee, and Deputy Police Chief Rob Fincher.

Mayor Lawson called the meeting to order and advised Council would go into Closed Session beginning at 6:15 PM. In accordance with section 2.1-344 (A) Code of Virginia (1950, and as amended) and upon a motion by Council Member Turner, seconded by Council Member Martin with the following 5-0 recorded vote: Vice Mayor Bowles, aye; Council Member Martin, aye; Council Member Pearson, aye; Council Member Turner, aye; and Mayor Lawson, aye. Council convened in Closed Session to discuss the following matters: (A) appointments to boards and commissions, as authorized by Subsection 1. At the conclusion of Closed Session, each returning member of Council certified that (1) only public business matters exempt from open meeting requirements were discussed in said Closed Session; and (2) only those business matters identified in the motion convening the Closed Session were heard, discussed, or considered during the meeting. City Attorney Monday added that since discussion related to board and commission appointments ended early, there was additional discussion by Council Members regarding the illegal gaming devices in some local businesses. This topic will be discussed later in the meeting. A motion was made by Vice Mayor Bowles; seconded by Council Member Martin, with the following 5-0 recorded vote in favor to return to Open Session: Mayor Lawson, aye; Council Member Martin, aye; Vice Mayor Bowles, aye; Council Member Turner, aye; and Council Member Pearson, aye.

Coming out of Closed Session, Council Member Martin made a motion to appoint Callie Hietala to the Arts and Cultural Committee (Historical Representative) for a 3-year term ending December 31, 2024. Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

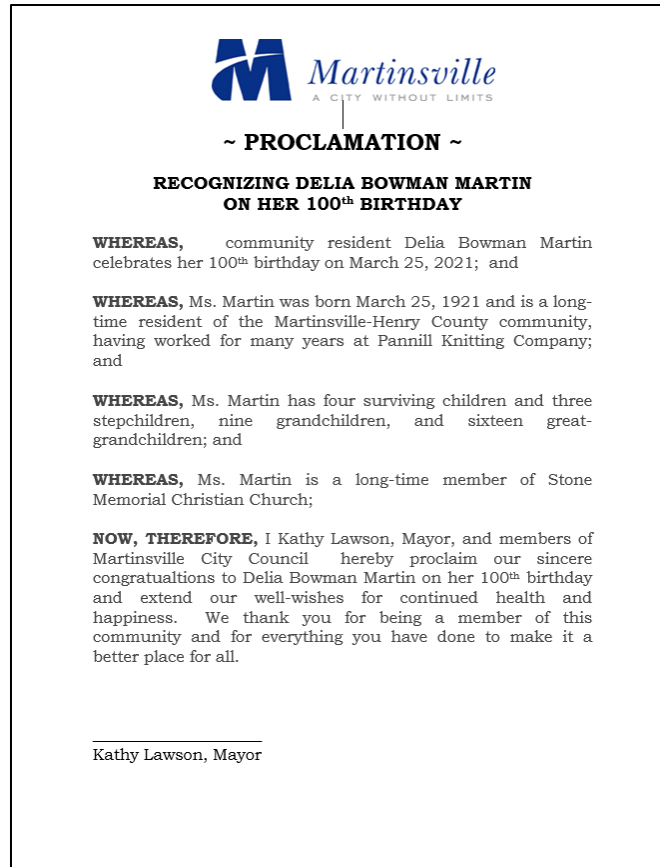
Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to appoint Kathleen McEvoy to the Architectural Review Board for a 3-year term ending March 31, 2024. Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor. No other action was taken from Closed Session.

Following the Pledge to the American Flag and invocation by Council Member Pearson, Mayor Lawson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Lawson explained that the meeting would follow COVID guidelines, allowing limited attendance and recognizing social distancing recommendations.

Approve minutes from the March 9, 2021 and March 10, 2021 Council Meetings – Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

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Read and present a proclamation recognizing the 100th birthday of local resident, Delia Bowman Martin - Council Member Turner read the proclamation which was presented to Ms. Martin's son and grandsons who were in attendance. Grandson Joe Martin thanked Council for the proclamation, stating that Ms. Martin may be old in years but young in mind.



Read and present a proclamation recognizing the week of April 4 – 10, 2021 as National Library Week - Council Member Martin read the proclamation which was presented to representatives of the Library; Betsy Haskins, Margaret Cardwell and Marty Gardner. Haskins expressed appreciation for the relationship the library has with the City and the support the City provides. Mayor Lawson asked if there is any discussion on when the Library may reopen to the public. Ms. Caldwell said they are following the government regulations. The library is open by appointment only and providing curbside service.



PROCLAMATION

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK APRIL 4 – 10, 2021

WHEREAS, libraries are not just about what they have for people, but what they do for and with people; and

WHEREAS, libraries have long served as trusted and treasured institutions, and library workers and librarians fuel efforts to better their communities, campuses and schools; and

WHEREAS, librarians are leaders in their institutions and organizations, in their communities, in the nation and in the world; and

WHEREAS, librarians continue to lead the way in leveling the playing field for all who seek information and access to technologies; and

WHEREAS, libraries and librarians look beyond their traditional roles and provide transformative opportunities for education, employment, entrepreneurship, empowerment and engagement, as well as new services that connect closely with patrons' needs; and

WHEREAS, libraries are pioneers supporting democracy and effecting social change, with a commitment to providing equitable access to information for all library users regardless of race, ethnicity, creed, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or socio-economic status; and

WHEREAS, libraries lead in working with diverse communities, including people of color, immigrants and people with disabilities, offering services and educational resources that transform communities, open minds and promote inclusion and diversity; and

WHEREAS, this year's theme, "Welcome to Your Library," promotes the idea that libraries extend far beyond the four walls of a building – and that everyone is welcome to use their services; and

WHEREAS, libraries, librarians, library workers and supporters across America are celebrating National Library Week;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kathy Lawson, Mayor, and members of Martinsville City Council, on this 23rd day of March, 2021 do hereby proclaim and acknowledge the week of April 4 – 10, 2021 as **National Library Week**. We encourage all residents to take advantage of the wonderful library resources available and thank their librarians and library workers for making information accessible to all.

Kathy Lawson, Mayor

Read and present a proclamation recognizing the week of March 28 – April 3, 2021 as National Boys & Girls Club Week- Vice Mayor Bowles read the proclamation which was presented to Joanie Petty, representative for the Boys & Girls Club. Petty said the club has had a very successful year even with COVID restrictions. They have added 25 more children and plan to move back into the schools soon. The volunteers have helped give the program a “family feel”. They have children from nine schools and in all grades. Council Member Pearson encourages residents to volunteer their time and donate to the program. MHC was only one of two Clubs in the state that remained open before August and only one of twenty-four in the nation that remained open. They received the Blue Spirit Award from the Boys & Girls Club of America which is the organization’s highest award. A donor recently made a generous \$100,000 donation which was awarded to the Martinsville-Henry County branch. Petty said they could not have been successful without the community coming together. Council Member Martin said that he will donate a tower garden to the local chapter allowing the children to grown their own garden.



PROCLAMATION

**RECOGNIZING THE WEEK OF MARCH 28 – APRIL 3,
2021 AS BOYS & GIRLS CLUB WEEK IN
MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA .**

WHEREAS, the young people of Martinsville, Virginia are tomorrow's leaders; and

WHEREAS, many young people need professional youth services to help them achieve their full potential; and

WHEREAS, there are 3 Boys & Girls Club organizations in Martinsville, Virginia – including Clearview Early Learning Center, Albert Harris Elementary School, Patrick Henry Elementary School, and the Teen Center – that serve more than 360 young people annually; and

WHEREAS, Boys & Girls Clubs instill young people with the self-confidence to believe they can succeed at anything they put their mind to, and stand at the forefront of efforts in the areas of academic success, healthy lifestyles, good character and citizenship; and

WHEREAS, Boys & Girls Club organizations in Virginia help ensure young people have a safe, supportive place to spend time and will provide them with quality youth development programs; and

WHEREAS, the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Blue Ridge will celebrate National Boys & Girls Club Week with some 4,000 Clubs and over 2 million more children and teens nationwide;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kathy Lawson, Mayor of the City of Martinsville, Virginia, do hereby proclaim March 28 – April 3, 2021, as Boys & Girls Club Week in Martinsville, Virginia.

Furthermore, I encourage all citizens to join me in recognizing and commending Boys & Girls Clubs in Virginia for providing the young people of our communities with comprehensive and effective youth development services.

Kathy Lawson, Mayor

Consider adoption of a resolution designating the City of Martinsville as a Bee City USA affiliate- Cindy Edgerton of the Martinsville Garden Club presented a PowerPoint updating Council on the status of insects and pollinators and the need for the resolution to designate the City as a Bee City affiliate. There are other pollinators besides bees such as wasps and flies. There are three Bee Cities in Virginia including Lynchburg, Scottsdale and Vienna but VA is outnumbered by Bee Cities in North Carolina. Edgerton detailed the requirements to become a Bee City including an annual review and renewal fee. Council Member Pearson made a motion to adopt the resolution; Vice Mayor Bowles seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor. Council Member Martin concluded by paraphrasing an Einstein quote stating, “when bees cease to exist, so do people.”

Council Members
Kathy Lawson, Mayor
Jennifer Bowles, Vice-Mayor
Chad Martin
Tammy Pearson
Danny Turner



City Manager
Leon E. Towarnicki
City Attorney
Eric H. Monday
Clerk of Council
Karen Roberts

RESOLUTION

DESIGNATING THE CITY OF MARTINSVILLE AS A BEE CITY USA® AFFILIATE

WHEREAS, the mission of BEE CITY USA is to galvanize communities to sustain pollinators, responsible for the reproduction of almost 90% of the world's flowering plant species, by providing them with healthy habitat, rich in a variety of native plants and free to nearly free of pesticides; and

WHEREAS, thanks to the more than 3,600 species of native bees in the United States, along with introduced honey bees, we have very diverse dietary choices rich in fruits, nuts, and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, bees and other pollinators have experienced population declines due to a combination of habitat loss, poor nutrition, pesticides (including insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides), parasites, diseases, and climate change; and

WHEREAS, pollinator-friendly communities can benefit local and regional economies through healthier ecosystems, increased vegetable and fruit crop yields, and increased demand for pollinator-friendly plant materials from local growers; and

WHEREAS, ideal pollinator-friendly habitat (A) is comprised of mostly native wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees blooming in succession throughout the growing season to provide diverse and abundant nectar and pollen, since many wild pollinators prefer or depend on the native plants with which they co-adapted; (B) is free to nearly free of pesticides, as many pesticides can harm pollinators and/or their habitat; (C) comprises undisturbed spaces (leaf and brush piles, unmown fields or field margins, fallen trees and other dead wood) for nesting and overwintering; and (D) provides connectivity between habitat areas to support pollinator movement and resilience; and

WHEREAS, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a long-term approach to maintaining healthy landscapes and facilities that minimizes risks to people and the environment by: identifying and removing the causes of pest problems rather than only attacking the symptoms (the pests); employing pests' natural enemies along with cultural, mechanical, and physical controls when prevention is not enough; and using pesticides only when no other method is feasible or effective; and

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www.martinsville-va.gov

WHEREAS, supporting pollinators fosters broad-based community engagement in environmental awareness and sustainability;

NOW, THEREFORE, in order to enhance understanding among local government staff and the public about the vital role that pollinators play and what each of us can do to sustain them, the City of Martinsville chooses to support and encourage healthy pollinator habitat creation and enhancement, resolving as follows:

1. The City of Martinsville is hereby designated as the BEE CITY USA sponsor.
2. The Director of the Public Works Department is designated as the BEE CITY USA Liaison.
3. Facilitation of Martinsville's BEE CITY USA program is assigned to the Martinsville Garden Club and/or Garden Study Club.
4. The Martinsville Garden Club and/or Garden Study Club in conjunction with the Martinsville Public Works Department is authorized to and shall:
 - a. **Celebration:** Host at least one educational event or pollinator habitat planting or restoration each year to showcase Martinsville's commitment to raising awareness of pollinator conservation and expanding pollinator health and habitat.
 - b. **Publicity & Information:** Install and maintain at least one authorized BEE CITY USA street sign in a prominent location, and create and maintain a webpage on the City's website which includes, at minimum a copy of this resolution and links to the national BEE CITY USA website; contact information for your BEE CITY USA Liaison and Committee; reports of the pollinator-friendly activities the community has accomplished the previous year(s); and your recommended native plant species list and integrated pest management plan (explained below).
 - c. **Habitat:** Develop and implement a program to create or expand pollinator-friendly habitat on public and private land, which includes, but is not limited to, identifying and inventorying Martinsville's real property that can be enhanced with pollinator-friendly plantings; creating a recommended locally native plant list to include wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees and a list of local suppliers for those species; and, tracking (by square footage and/or acreage) annual area of pollinator habitat created or enhanced.
 - d. **Pollinator-Friendly Pest Management:** Create and adopt an integrated pest management (IPM) plan designed to prevent pest problems, reduce pesticide use, and expand the use of non-chemical pest management methods.

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- e. **Policy & Plans:** Establish, through the City, a policy to acknowledge and commit to the BEE CITY USA designation and review the policy and other relevant documents to consider improvements to pest management policies and practices as they relate to pollinator conservation, identify appropriate locations for pollinator-friendly plantings, and consider other appropriate measures.
- f. **Renewal:** After completing the first calendar year as a BEE CITY USA affiliate, each February, apply for renewal of Martinsville's BEE CITY USA designation following the format provided by BEE CITY USA, including a report of the previous year's BEE CITY USA activities, and paying the renewal fee based on Martinsville's population.

ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Martinsville, Virginia, this 23rd day of March, 2021

Kathy Lawson, Mayor

Attest: Clerk of Council

VOTE

Kathy Lawson, Mayor
Jennifer Bowles, Vice-Mayor
Chad Martin
Tammy Pearson
Danny Turner

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Bee City Proposal for Martinsville by Martinsville Garden Club and Garden Study Club

Importance of Pollinators

75% crops
1/3 food
\$577 billion worldwide
90% flowering plants
Wildlife, water quantity and quality, and human health

Loss of Pollinators

23% loss in US between 2008 and 2013
60% loss in honeybees over the last 50 years

Bee City USA

Xerces Society
founded 2012
Other affiliates
Mission Statement
Galvanize communities to sustain pollinators by increasing the abundance of native plants, providing nest sites, and reducing the use of pesticides.

How

Form committee
Use an existing committee or subcommittee or create a new committee within the government or a non-profit organization - committee is advisory only and reports to City Council
Designate a facilitating group connection between government and Bee City Committee
Complete online application - pledge to have program in place in 1-2 years
Adopt resolution - template provided
Receive approval of city's highest elected official
Pay application fee - scaled to population

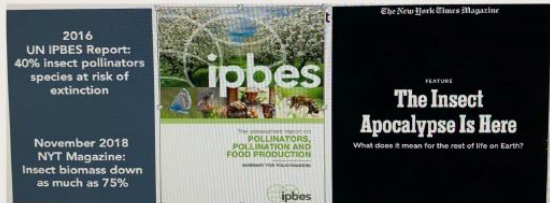
Commitments

Create and enhance pollinator habitat on public and private land.
Integrate a Pest Management Plan
Create a native plant list
Create a native plant supplier list
Make city policies and plans pollinator conscious - integrate native plants in plan
Host pollinator awareness events
Publicly acknowledge Bee City USA affiliation with signs and online presence
Annually apply for renewal and report on last year's activities
Pay initial application and renewal fees

Benefits

Bring community efforts together
Connects City to a National Effort
Access to resources - templates/webinars, fact sheets, social media posts, logos
Accountability through Committee and Annual Reports
Supports latest research and best practices

The World is Seeing Insect Pollinators and Insect Biomass Decline



The world is seeing a disturbing decline in insect pollinators and insect biomass.

Pollinators and insects hold the planet together



Pollinators and insects hold the planet together, impacting our ability to grow crops for food.

Pollinator habitat supports more than pollinators



Pollinators help us with our food but they also serve as a source of food for many other species. The food web is exponentially disrupted without insects. We humans are part of the food web and are impacted when insects struggle. It's in OUR best interest to help.

The Bee Has Been Declared the Most Important Living Being on the Planet. Here is a native bumble bee.



Bee City USA is part of the Xerces Society



There has been a great response, nationwide, to the Bee City movement. Here is their logo and the sign you put up if your city becomes a bee city.

Since 2012, 98 Bee City USA Affiliates Certified (as of 10/19)

ARKANSAS Eureka Springs, Mountain View	IOWA Mount Vernon	NEW MEXICO Albuquerque	SOUTH CAROLINA Florence, Greenwood, Lake City
CALIFORNIA Fort Bragg, Orlando, Redding, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Seaside, Thousand Oaks, Woodland	KENTUCKY Clarkson	NORTH CAROLINA Asheville, Belmont, Bethania, Boone, Carthage, Davidson, Durham, Gastonia, Hayesville, Hendersonville, Highlands, Hillsborough, Matthews, Mount Holly	TENNESSEE Bill Buckle, Lookout Mountain
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Washington	MARYLAND Anne Arundel County + Annapolis + Highland Beach, Berlin, Howard County, Salisbury	OHIO Mansfield, Toledo, Wilmington, Dayton	TEXAS Beaumont, Beeville, Denton
FLORIDA Webster	MICHIGAN Ann Arbor, Charter Towship of Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti	OREGON Astoria, Clatsop, Gresham, Medford, Newport, Phoenix, Talent, West Linn, Wilsonville	VERMONT Burlington
GEORGIA Atlanta, Canon, Decatur, Dunwoody, Jefferson, Lookout Mountain, Norcross, Pine Lake, Rome	MISSOURI Crestwood, Fenton	WASHINGTON Bellingham, Everett, Lynden, Skagitway, Snohomish, Tacoma, Tumacac	VIRGINIA Lynchburg, Scottsville, Vienna
IDaho Cotton City, Mountain Home, Twin Falls	NEW HAMPSHIRE Durham	WEST VIRGINIA Martinsburg, Weirton	WISCONSIN Appleton, Hales Corners, Madison, Mequon
ILLINOIS Carlinville, Village of Barrington Hills	NEW JERSEY Carteret, Clifton, Elizabeth, Jersey City, Newark, Paterson, Rutherford, Union, Woodbridge	WYOMING Cheyenne	

See current list at beecityusa.org/current-cities.html

As of October, 2019 there are 98 Bee Cities and counting. There is also a Bee Campus movement. In Virginia, the first Bee Campus was Randolph College in Lynchburg and now James Madison University has the designation.

What you won't believe, though, is how amazing the Bee City movement is for our garden clubs. Honestly, it's like a dream come true. It is EXTREMELY beneficial to become a Bee City. Our Blue Ridge Conservation approached Lynchburg city officials and they jumped at the chance to participate! With our assistance, Lynchburg applied this past summer and we became the 89th Bee City in the United States. We were the second in Virginia. Scottsville was the first and now Vienna has become the third. But wait, there are 19 in North Carolina! We need to catch up and pass them. We have GCV clubs in 33 cities in Virginia, so that should be easy to do!

There are incentives for cities to form these kinds of partnerships with non-profits like us, one being that they qualify for more grants and funding if they participate in conservation/ecological programs. We were thrilled with their willingness and enthusiasm to work with us. I keep asking them if they have found any downsides and their answer is always a resounding "NO!"

Here's how it works:

How To Become a Bee City:

- City Applies Online
- City Council Adopts a Formal Resolution (template provided) Pledging to Reduce Use of Pesticides/Herbicides/Fungicides, to Plant Native Plants to Support Pollinators, Outreach
- Pay a Small Fee (Based on Population/Lynchburg's was \$400)

In order to become a bee city, your city will need to fill out an online application and send in an application fee, which is based on your local population. Lynchburg's fee was \$400, which our Blue Ridge Conservation paid to get the ball rolling.

Next, after the Xerces Society approves the application, your local city council has to formally adopt a resolution committing to planting native plants, reducing the use of chemicals and providing outreach about these issues.

Commitments of a Bee City:

- Form a Working Committee, bringing together all interested parties
- Put up at Least one Bee City USA sign
- Host Outreach/Educational Event: Historic Garden Week Counts as an Event—the Beauty of This!
- Provide a non GMO Native Plants List/Supplier to Citizens
- Integrate Native Plants into City Planting Plans
- File Annual Renewal Report/Renewal Fee

The commitments of a bee city are:

1. They must form a working committee to handle the duties of being a Bee City. Many of us from Blue Ridge Conservation are on the Bee City working committee, in fact, two of us chair the committee. Many other organizations that share our mission are also represented: The Lynchburg Area Food Council, Randolph College, the Piedmont Beekeepers Association, Lynchburg Water Resources, Lynchburg Buildings and Grounds, Lynchburg Parks & Recreation, etc. What's so great is that we are meeting all of the players and everyone is motivated and excited! It's a great team we are building.
2. The City must agree to put up a sign showing that it has become a Bee City. In Lynchburg, the Public Works department is making the sign, so they are covering the cost of that (otherwise they are about \$75 each). I think we will have several in Lynchburg and they will be placed on the highways near our gateways to the city.

3. Your city must have some kind of outreach to educate the public about the issues facing pollinators and how to help, such as an event. Here's the beauty for our garden clubs: Historic Garden Week qualifies as a Bee City event, so you can tell your city when they apply that you will cover the part about having an annual event.
4. Your city must agree to provide a non GMO native plants list and where to buy them locally and also to integrate native plants into future city plantings. They must also pledge to reduce their use of pesticides/herbicides/fungicides. In Lynchburg, the Parks and Recreation Department is going to create a Bee City website where citizens can find the native plants list and suppliers for our area.
5. The city must file an annual report with Xerces about how they are fulfilling their Bee City commitments and pay the annual renewal fee, which is the same as the application fee. As I mentioned, we paid the application fee but the city is going to take over the renewal fee.

What are some of the benefits of becoming a bee city?

Benefits of Becoming a Bee City:

- Brings community efforts together and into focus
- Institutionalizes "Pollinator Habitat Plan" into City's planting plans
- Connects City to a National Effort
- Support from the Xerces Society on the latest research, best practices, etc. Help is just a phone call or email away.
- Access to Resources such as templates/webinars, Fact Sheets, Social Media Posts, logos, etc.
- Accountability through Working Committee/Annual Reports

It brings all of the interested parties together so everyone can work as a team to make a difference. It connects your city to a national movement. Your city officials will have the support of the Xerces Society and their latest research, they are just a phone call or

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Bee Lawns are a special grass seed mix to assist pollinators. We also plan to encourage our members to plant bee lawns.

Blue Ridge Conservation Worked with City Road Crews to Plant 3 Acres of Pollinator Beds in 2019.



Back to Blue Ridge Conservation: In addition to successfully helping Lynchburg become a Bee City, because of this new relationship, we were able to influence our city highway department to plant three acres of pollinator friendly flower beds on our local roads this past summer. Our clubs split the cost of the beds and here is a photo. Our city has since committed to trying native perennial pollinator beds next year, which they hope will last for many years, thus reducing maintenance, watering and mowing over the long term. We have arranged for a local landscape architect to offer pro bono advice on what to plant and the city will provide the labor and seek funding for the plant material. We are so happy that they are committed to the direction we started and will continue with it next year and into the future.

Blue Ridge Conservation is Partnering with Beekeepers to Sell Local Honey to Raise Money for More Pollinator Beds on our Highways.



We partnered with the Piedmont Beekeepers Association to bottle local honey and all proceeds will be used for our pollinator projects. This is our honey label.

And, we are working with our city schools that has an active beekeeping club with over 20 hives. We are talking about approaching local nurseries and places like Lowes and Home Depot to donate left over trees at the end of the season to be used on city grounds and for give-away to local citizens. We are talking about planting a public pollinator demonstration garden. We have asked a local golf course to consider trying "Operation Pollinator," a new program for US golf courses. The list goes on and on, and honestly, we can't contain the enthusiasm. We can barely keep up.

Blue Ridge Conservation has introduced our city to the international "New Perennial" movement of Piet Oudolf for future city plantings.






We were able to influence our City's plant list for their new gateway garden that they are putting in this fall, which is a project of the Lynchburg Garden Club. We told them about Piet Oudolf and his international naturalistic New Perennial movement. Here he is standing in his Lurie Garden at Millenium Park in Chicago. Our city is "all in" and ready to give this new model a try. This style of planting is going to be different from what people are used to seeing and will require some education, and I'm sure there will be challenges. The premise is to leave gardens in place over the winter, as the leftover leaves, seeds and twigs provide food and habitat to insects to help them survive the winter. Finding beauty in the decay in the winter garden is a learning curve, but it's just a more natural approach to gardening and it's always followed by regrowth in the spring.

We have a friend at VDOT! Secretary of Transportation, Shannon Valentine, of Lynchburg.



You may not know this, but our current Secretary of Transportation is Shannon Valentine. She is from Lynchburg and she is committed to the conservation programs at VDOT. She recently restructured things so that all conservation related programs are under one umbrella at VDOT, making it more user friendly for highway departments across the state to utilize the programs. This is a good time to work with VDOT on conservation issues. We should not miss our chance.

<p>VDOT Has Funds For Pollinator Gardens.</p>  <p>We are encouraging our members to purchase the Protect Pollinators license plate or the Wildflowers License Plate as monies from the sale of these plates help fund VDOT highway pollinator beds along our state roads.</p> <p>Get a <i>Protect Pollinators</i> or <i>Wildflowers</i> License Plate to Fund VDOT Pollinator Initiatives.</p>  	<p>Could the GCV Create a Statewide Pollinator/Native Plants Network?</p> <p>If we all become Bee Cities, partnering with our local government and highway departments, we could positively impact the health of ecosystems across the Commonwealth with minimal monetary commitment and maximum influence.</p> <p>We can promote the use of native plants and trees, address climate change, help pollinators, reduce the use of chemicals, and raise awareness to the many conservation issues that are so important. This format gives us another way to work together, as well, to have a statewide impact. We could communicate as bee cities about what each city is doing, what works, what doesn't, how to find resources, etc. We could facilitate getting VDOT regional offices on the same page all across our state.</p> <p>It doesn't take much work or money to get the ball rolling and the impact is tremendous. Let's be strategic about our outreach. Take the time to read the new GCV Pollinator Resolution, which you can find as a link on the Conservation page of the GCV website.</p> <p>Good luck, future Bee Cities!</p>
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Consider approval of consent agenda- Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented; Council Member Martin seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

Business from the Floor – No business from the floor

Comments by City Council – Council Member Pearson thanked the citizens for offering positive comments and prayers for her two eye surgeries. Council Member Martin thanked City staff who live far away and stay late for Council meetings. Council Member Turner shared that local resident and Vietnam veteran Major Pete Gooble was finally laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery after COVID delayed the burial a year ago. Vice Mayor Bowles acknowledged the City Manager, Assistant City Manager and the Mayor for always responding to her questions quickly. Mayor Lawson reminded citizens of Hazardous Waste Day on March 24. There will be a marathon the morning of April 3 and some streets will be closed for the safety of those runners. There will be a Memorial Day service on May 31 at Roselawn Cemetery. Lawson also received a letter congratulating the City for earning recognition as a 2020 Tree City USA again this year.

Comments by the City Manager – City Manager Towarnicki explained that the last Council meeting was a community meeting related to the Pine Hall project and was attended by only a few residents. A neighborhood meeting on the project was recently held at Albert Harris and the City used the mobile message board which greatly approved attendance, and the City plans to use the mobile message board to better communicate the next community meeting. Due to some TV equipment issues, Council meetings can be displayed live, however, the recordings can no longer be viewed on YouTube and cannot be rerun on MGTV. The City now uses Vimeo instead of YouTube. Because YouTube dropped the City's content, Council meeting videos on the website were deleted. The City IT department has reloaded videos back to 2018 and older

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videos are available on request. The School Board meetings are available through the School Board administration. The next reversion work session will be Wednesday, April 14 from 530-730pm. The budget presentation will be pushed back by one month while the City waits on another COVID grant, with the presentation and first approval scheduled for the May 25 Council meeting. Towarnicki shared budget work session dates with the school work session scheduled for Tuesday May 18.

City Attorney Monday said that Council had received questions on electronic skill games at local convenience stores and restaurants. These were originally considered illegal gambling devices. Virginia has said these machines are currently legal but will be delegating them again effective summer, 2022. Martinsville City Council established a citywide zoning ban about 10 years ago banning these machines which remains the law in the City regardless if the state allows them. If an owner of a commercial establishment wants to change the ordinance, they must lobby Council to change the zoning ordinance. There is a private club waiver.

There being no further business, Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Council Member Martin with all Council Members voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:50pm.

Karen Roberts
Clerk of Council

Kathy Lawson
Mayor